

Health Reform: Back to the Future

Lunchtime Seminar

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April 13, 2011

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Threats to ACA are Real, But the Law Holds Some Cards Too:

- ✓ Influential stakeholders still generally support reform (and not all for altruistic reasons)
- ✓ Implementation power provides Administration leverage and 2-way motivation for good behavior
- ✓ Democratic Senate, 60-vote threshold and veto
- ✓ Presidential Bully Pulpit
- ✓ Continued implementation makes reform part of fabric of system and more difficult to roll back

So, Why are Democrats So Inept at Selling ACA? How About:

<p>You can keep what you have and little will change</p>	<p>We are fundamentally reforming our system</p>
<p>Affordable coverage for <u>every</u> American will be ensured (through tax credits, Medicaid expansions, etc)</p>	<p>Reform will not increase costs and, in fact, it will reduce the deficit</p>
<p>Seniors will have more choices, benefits, and will see the life of the Trust Fund extended</p>	<p>There will be \$500 billion in Medicare savings</p>
<p>This is consistent with all the bipartisan health reform policies of the past</p>	<p>There is no Republican support</p>
<p>“It is an extraordinary achievement.” –Obama “This is a big \$%!#-ing deal.” -Biden</p>	<p>Democrats do not defend or promote. In fact, they try to change the subject</p>

And While Republicans are More Consistent and Effective, Facts are Not Their Strong Suit

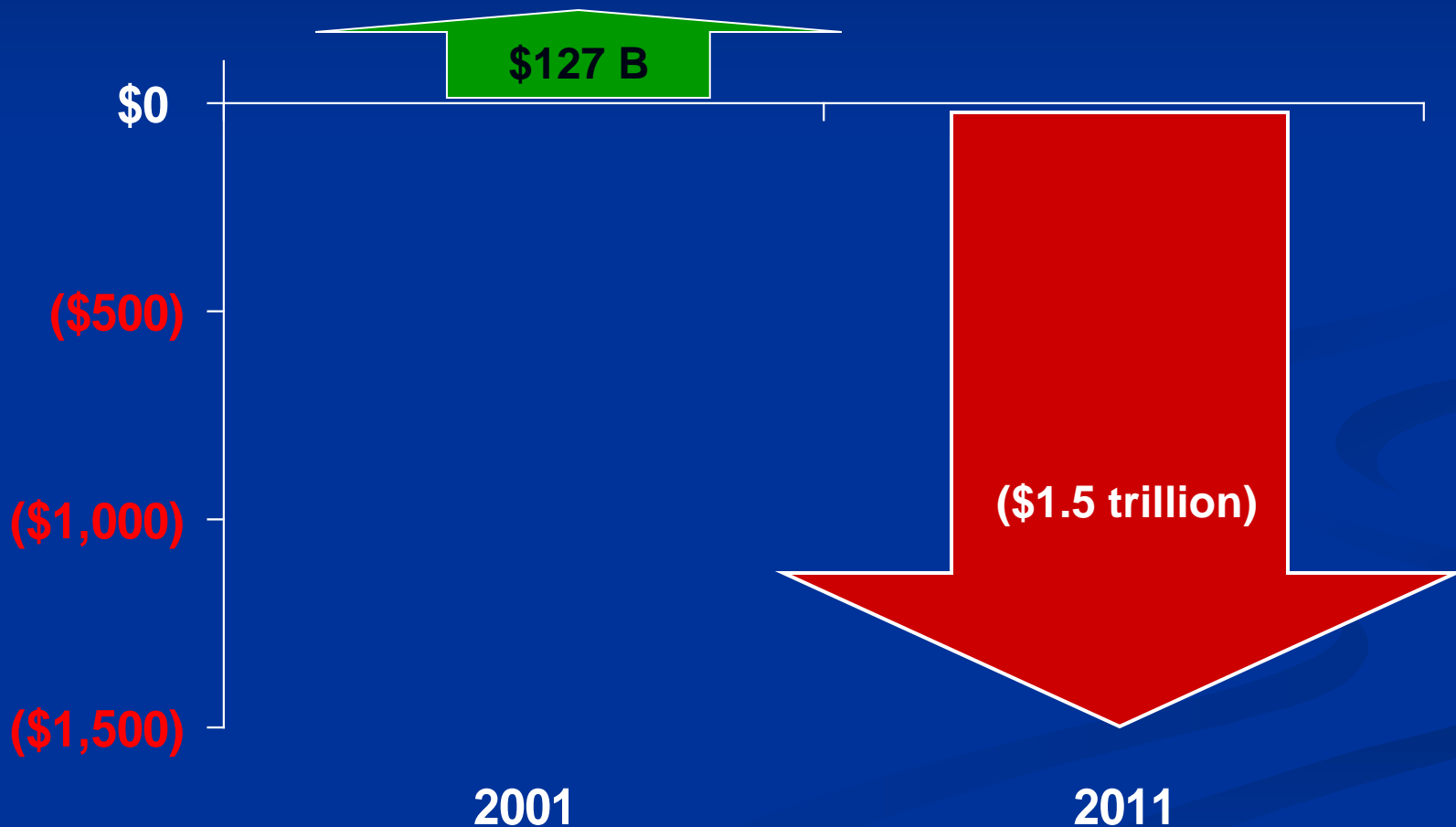
ObamaCare is a government takeover	There should be no public option that is a placeholder for single-payer (there is no such option)
ObamaCare failed to have any serious cost containment	ObamaCare cut Medicare by \$500 billion
ObamaCare will slash Medicare and hurt seniors	We must get a handle on open-ended entitlements
ObamaCare will create rationing and establish death panels	We spend too much money in the last year of life (in face of AZ transplant decision)
ObamaCare is a budget/deficit buster	The independent CBO deficit reduction scoring of ACA is wrong; BTW, we should repeal the Innovation Center, IPAB, and CER

Current Positioning for Opponents and Supporters

- Job of Opponents of Affordable Care Act:
 - To effectively (but not annoyingly) keep issue front and center by raising concerns/fear through amendments and oversight, positioning for 2012 election AND developing a credible alternative
- Job of Supporters of the Affordable Care Act:
 - To make health reforms worth saving – to take off table as a politically potent issue. Job is to make discussions of repeal unpopular/out of touch, implement law with limited disruption and be open to “reforming reform”
- The Real Job of BOTH Parties, though, for 2012 is:
 - To play to/secure the independents AND prepare for the next meaningful health reform debate...

Which Will Be All About Debt/Deficit

Deficit, Dollars in Billions, FY 2001-11



Fork in the Road

Scenario I: Status Quo

- Legislative polarization/paralysis prevail
- Stakeholders keep low profile

Scenario II: “Mandate” Found Unconstitutional

- Major Policy and Political Disruption
- Supporters and Stakeholders move to quickly find alternative but opponents effectively block in Congress

Scenario III: Republican President is Elected... Real Threat

- Republicans dominate all Seats of Power
- ACA will be “repealed”

So, Back to Status Quo Environment...

- Because legislative changes in Congress will be limited, the primary health reform game will be:
 - ✓ Executive Branch implementation
 - ✓ Congressional oversight
 - ✓ The Supremes
 - ✓ State actions
 - ✓ Presidential election positioning
- The next real health care debate will be deficit/debt driven and it will move from repeal and replace to retain and reform